



Pistachio Lemon Thins with Lemon Curd

Makes about 3 dozen small cookies or 18 sandwich cookies

Once sandwiched, the cookies should be refrigerated if not serving within a few hours. While lemon curd has been around a lot longer than refrigeration has, I don't want to recommend that you pack these into an unrefrigerated tin. You can also buy lemon curd in a jar, but, of course, it's better if you make it yourself!

For the lemon curd filling:

- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 3 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 4 tablespoons/56 g unsalted butter, cut into thin pieces

For the cookies:

- 1/3 cup/40 g shelled raw pistachios (unsalted)
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons/144 g all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup/101 g granulated sugar, plus more for rolling
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- Zest of 2 lemons
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla or lemon extract
- 1/2 cup/113 g unsalted butter, softened

To finish:

- 1/3 cup/40 g finely ground raw unsalted pistachios

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1. Make the lemon curd: Combine the lemon juice, lemon zest, egg yolks, and sugar in a small non-reactive saucepan and whisk until smooth. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a whisk, until hot, 5 to 10 minutes. The mixture will begin to thicken as the temperature increases. Once the mixture thickens (you'll see a bubble or two, and the foam on the surface will subside), reduce the heat and cook for another 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove the saucepan from the heat and strain over a bowl. Stir in the butter until it has completely melted. Stir occasionally to help it cool, and then transfer to the refrigerator until cold. You can make this 1 or 2 days ahead of time (wrap it tightly).
 2. Make the cookies: Heat oven to 300°F. Place pistachios in the bowl of a food processor and pulse until fairly finely ground. It's OK if there are some larger pieces. Add flour, sugar, baking soda, salt, and lemon zest to the bowl and pulse again to mix everything well.
 3. Add the lemon juice, extract, and the butter (cut up). Pulse until the mixture starts to come together into a dough. Transfer to a medium bowl, and knead a few times with your hand to ensure that everything is well-mixed.
 4. Put some sugar in a small bowl. Pinch off a tiny piece of dough (10 g or a rounded measuring teaspoon), roll into a ball, and roll in the sugar. I like to roll 4 or 5 at a time and shake the bowl to coat them. Arrange the cookies at least 2 inches apart (they are going to spread quite a bit) on two parchment-lined baking sheets. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes until barely golden on the edges. These cookies don't take on a lot of color.
 5. Let cool on the baking sheets for a few minutes and transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Repeat with remaining dough.
 6. When cool, spread a heaping teaspoon of lemon curd on a cookie, spreading it nearly to the edges. Top with another cookie and press down slightly so that the filling spreads out at least as far as the edges of the cookies. Roll the edges in the finely ground pistachios.

Some Tips for Success:

- It's important to make sure the lemon curd is fully thickened, or it will be runny when you try to use it as a filling. Don't be afraid to be a little aggressive when cooking it. It's not as delicate as a custard.
- Once the lemon curd is chilled, don't stir it before using, as this will thin it out slightly. You want it as thick as possible.
- If possible, make the curd the day before you want to use it, so it has a chance to really chill.
- You'll need a food processor to make these cookies. If you only have a mini processor (or something like a magic bullet) you can grind the nuts in that and continue mixing by hand.
- If you are not planning to sandwich the cookies, you can make them a little bigger, about 14 g each.
- Use a scale to portion the cookies to keep them from getting too big and to keep them a uniform size.
- Buy raw, not roasted, pistachios for this recipe for the vibrant color they provide.

- The cookies spread quite a bit, so make sure to leave plenty of space between them.
- The dough can be used immediately and doesn't have to be chilled. You can, however, make it ahead of time and chill until needed, if that fits better with your schedule.
- Grind the pistachios used for decoration as finely as you can. I find a regular food processor does a good job. Put them in a small bowl so you can pile them up when rolling the edges in them. That way they can work their way in between the cookies better.
- You can use Meyer Lemons if you find them, but I like the extra tartness that comes from regular lemons for this recipe.
- If you want to make these sandwich cookies for a cookie box, use raspberry preserves instead of the lemon curd, which requires refrigeration.
- The cookies will soften somewhat (in a good way) after being sandwiched.
- If you find yourself with a lot of zested lemons, make a batch of lemon juice. The zested lemons won't keep well once they've lost their protective skin. Put them in a plastic bag until you're ready to make juice, and then keep it in a jar for at least a week, or freeze for later. I love having lemon juice handy for when I'm cooking!